



Celebrating completion of magnificent lighted highway system.

The photograph was taken at Owensmouth while 2500 people were enjoying themselves at the barbecue. Parked all about the field, where roasted steers and other barbecued delicacies were served, were hundreds of automobiles. The streets of Owensmouth are indicated in the foreground with the lighted Sherman Way stretching toward Van Nuys in the background.

Resplendent.

LIGHTS BLAZE WELCOME TO ADMIRING THOUSANDS.

Glowing Spectacle Never Before Equalled Is Culmination of Celebration of Completion of Magnificent Boulevard System Connecting Van Nuys, Owensmouth and Surrounding Territory.

WHEN at 7:30 o'clock last night the turning of a switch at Owensmouth caused bright lights to blaze forth along thirty-one miles of one of the finest highway systems in California the people of San Fernando Valley and the men of Los Angeles who have spent millions in constructive work there rejoiced. It was the consummation of the development of an ideal suburban farm community, where beauty, utility and comfort have been added to exceptional natural endowment.

The thousands of people who were there to see and admire, beheld a broad level territory, dotted with luxurious homes and fine public buildings, thriving towns, paved boulevards interlacing it all and connecting it with Los Angeles. By day they saw the beauty of the young orchards and bountiful crops of various kinds, the broad boulevards bordered with tens of thousands of rose bushes in bloom and ornamental trees.

Then, when the sun had set behind the western mountains and the fading light began to blot out the land a new and in many respects more wonderful perspective of the recently-developed valley was brought to view. In a twinkling the whole countryside was aglow. Down the shining surface of Sherman way and the newly-completed State highway as far as the eye could see stretched the illuminating electrolights. No outdoor electrical display ever attempted in California could compare with it.

GLOWING PROCESSION.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten spectacle, when a thousand or more automobiles started from Owensmouth for Van Nuys traversing the State highway in a brilliant scintillating procession of glowing lamps. The brightly-lighted highway combined with the headlights of the cars produced an illumination that made the rising moon look pale by comparison.

At one point south of Owensmouth where the road winds and turns in graceful curves the lights of half a thousand cars were visible at once and the enthusiasm of the admiring visitors increased.

The celebration was a successful culmination of suburban community development unsurpassed anywhere. A new standard of comfort and progress had been established. The territory surrounding Van Nuys and Owensmouth, with its artistic buildings, and its completed system of lighted boulevards was declared by many men of State-wide prominence last night to be the last word in modern farm life.

Actual development began a little more than three years ago when the Los Angeles Suburban Homes Company purchased 47,500 acres of land that had formerly been comprised in a great ranch. Van Nuys was subdivided as a townsite and has been virtually sold out. Owensmouth was opened a year later. In building the towns and developing the farm lands the company spent money unstintedly.

In welcoming to the celebration the 2500 people who assembled at Owensmouth, George Hanna, in the name of the board of control of the Suburban Homes Company, spoke as follows:

PURCHASE OF THE TRACT.

"Nearly five years ago the board of control, composed of five men of affairs, known far beyond the confines of Los Angeles—Gen. H. G. Otis, O. F. Grant, Gen. M. H. Sherman, Harry Chandler and H. J. Whitley—purchased what was then known as the Van Nuys and Lankershim Rancho, comprising 47,500 acres, a portion of which you have traversed today. Mr. Whitley was unanimously selected by his associates on the board for the all-important position of executive in the field, and after a long hard campaign, he has made good in a striking and effective manner. At that time the tract was for the most part one vast wheat and barley field, about 31,000 acres in one field being planted to these crops.

"This great tract was purchased with the idea of cutting it up into small holdings in order to provide homes for the thousands who are always looking for just such opportunities.

"Promptly succeeding the original purchase by these nervy business men, many others were admitted to par-

ticipate in the project, and through numerous divisions of the several individual interests, the entire number of owners was early increased to nearly one hundred, even before the extensive work of systematic subdivision had been begun. This work has been carried on with such vigor and rapidity ever since as to make the total population now living upon the tract in town and country, what you see today.

"To those unaccustomed to this class of work it looked as though a venture of this sort might possibly result in failure, but if these doubters had taken time to look deeper into the subject, had examined the fertility of the soil of this vast domain, and had investigated the character of the men behind the project, they could not have failed to see that what they have seen today was simply recognizing the inevitable.

"The business of this enterprise is vividly illustrated in what seemed to the uninitiated a waste of time and money. Beginning at the easterly end of the tract, fifteen miles from where we are now standing, a swath 200 feet wide was cut through the barley fields and the work of constructing a paved double boulevard commenced, one side exclusively for automobiles, the other for general traffic, parked on both sides with fine shrubbery. An electric line, second to none in the United States, held the center. The work upon this wound its way westerly and northerly through the town of Van Nuys, thence directly to the spot where we now stand, thence southerly to connect with the great highway of the State of California.

COSTLY BOULEVARD.

"The boulevard itself was constructed at a cost of over \$500,000, while the electric line cost nearly \$1,000,000 more. But the results which you have seen today show luminously that this expenditure of time and money was fully justified, and coming generations will look back and declare, 'Those dreamers penetrated very far into the future.'

"Next came the locating of towns, and on February 22, 1911, the townsite of Van Nuys was offered to the public. To many it appeared an impossible project—the idea of starting a town in the midst of a barley field which extended in either direction farther than the eye could reach; but the results before you—actual achievements—tell the story of how these things are done in Southern California when the right men are behind the enterprise.

RESULT IN THREE YEARS.

"In the brief period of a little over three years, more has been accomplished than in many towns of ten times the age. You have not failed to observe the high-class residences, the inviting bungalows, the impressive school and church buildings, the large area of orchard that have been planted and the general scenes of activity and thrift on every hand. The lands in the tract are now largely in the hands of new owners, who are building their homes here, and I can truthfully say they are sturdy, intelligent people, who would be a valuable acquisition to any community. All praise is due these citizens for what they have achieved here—it is they who have created on this marvelous spot the true 'big interest' which here keeps its hair and rears its young.

"Now the town of Owensmouth is just springing into existence.

"The event which we celebrate tonight is the completion of this great boulevard and the many paved and macadamized roads connecting the same, with the county good roads from San Fernando to Chatsworth on the north, and with the great State Highway on the south. These connecting cross roads have been made possible by the friendly co-operation of the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles county in extending those constructed by the Suburban Home Company to their various connection with the County Highway, showing what can be accomplished by united action.

"We also celebrate the turning on of the lights along the State Highway being the first section to be illuminated, completing a circuit of thirty-one miles lighted by means of handsome electrolights raised upon substantial cast iron posts, resting upon cement foundations as enduring as the material of which they are composed.

"All of you realize from experience that these things do not come by

(Continued on Fourth Page.)

(Continued from Second Page.)

chance; they are the results of days and nights of unremitting toil.

"The master minds who compose this Board of Control possessed the ability to plan and the skill and determination to bring the great project to its splendid consummation. They have from the first had the benefit of the tireless efforts and long and successful experience in similar great undertakings of one of their number—H. J. Whitley. As executive leader in the field in this vast enterprise, he has given his time and talents in undimmed measure, always backed up and reinforced by the ready official sanction and the powerful support of the board as a whole.

"Men in a position to know have pronounced this among the most gigantic enterprises and one of the most stupendous undertakings of its kind ever inaugurated and brought to a successful consummation in the United States; and as it is a Los Angeles project, we all may well be proud of it.

IN FUTURE YEARS.

"Last of all comes another subject—never a dry one—which deserves mention. When this tract was offered to the public, no promises of a water supply were made by the Board of Control save the single one that water might be obtained from wells to be dug by the purchasers themselves. There was no hot air and no hot water in the promises; but all the same, the water is coming. It is here now at our very gates, and it is Owens River water in mighty abundance, and the cultivators can secure it in the same manner as water can be secured on adjacent lands covered by the famous conduit.

"Conditions will be the same and prices the same here as upon adjacent lands—not a whit better, not a whit worse. The prices to be paid for water upon all these lands will be the prices fixed by the public through the city government. There is nothing to explain away, nothing to conceal, nothing to apologize for, nothing to excuse in this regard.

"And when an abundant supply of Owens River water shall have been distributed over these fertile lands, what a mighty future will be created in the great domain of production through the intelligent efforts of those whose fortunate lot is cast in this superb vale of the San Fernando."

The celebration began at Van Nuys at 3 o'clock with a concert by the Van Nuys band from the balcony of the Johnston piano and organ factory. A pleasing feature of this part of the programme was singing by the school children of Van Nuys.

Visitors were then given an opportunity to inspect the factory with all the departments at work. This is the only organ factory west of Chicago. It employs 100 hands now and at full capacity requires 250 men.

The public buildings and beautifully developed homes near by were viewed, then by automobile and electric trains more than 2000 people proceeded to Owensmouth. More music was furnished there and at 5.30 o'clock a barbecue was served on great tables out of doors, near the office of the Suburban Homes Company.

The culmination of the programme was the turning on of the lights on the entire thirty-one mile circuit, the glowing parade back to Van Nuys and an hour of carnival merrymaking at that town.

The spectacle created by the turning on of the lights and the glowing parade from Owensmouth to Van Nuys elicited unqualified admiration. The people could not restrain their enthusiasm and exclaimed again and again as new turns in the road revealed attractions hitherto unrevealed.

Many compliments were heard for the skill (born of long and varied experience in farm subdivision and town building) with which the splendid project seen in this development has been managed by the able field executive of the board of control, Mr. H. J. Whitley, who regards this as the crowning achievement of his life.

Prominent men from many California cities were present, advocates of good roads being there in force. Nearly all the members of the board of control and others interested in the company were included in the gathering. Los Angeles was represented by members of the City Council, officials of the Automobile Club of Southern California, and many hundreds of automobilists. Others from away were: N. D. Darlington, State Highway Commissioner; Supervisors Pridham and Woodley of Los Angeles county; Mayor Oscar Ford; Highway Commissioners Samuel Evans and H. P. Campbell; W. V. Darling, A. J. Stalder, H. P. Zimmerman, J. W. Brown, K. S. Carlton, Riverside city and county officials; Thomas Burke, secretary of the Bakersfield Board of Trade; Harry McCray and a delegation of about twenty others from Bakersfield.